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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6102
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0807
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4515
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RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 6686
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC: DPRK

"MUST WE ENDURE A THIRD GENERATION OF THE KIM DYNASTY?"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (06/03): "Our problem lies in how to respond to this irrational regime. North Korea is, in the short term, very likely to stage provocations overseas to solidify its grip on power. ... For the medium term, the ROKG should review its North Korea policy. ... The ROKG should explore ways to come up with a new policy with a right mix of pressure and inducements in order to rein in this unpredictable and irrational regime. In the long term, the ROKG should prepare for possible instability in North Korea which might follow or arise in the process of power transfer from Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un."

"KIM'S FARCICAL SUCCESSION"

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo editorialized (06/03): "The obsession with nuclear arms, missiles and other weapons of mass destruction is part of a malignant campaign to keep the Kim family in control. Our North Korean policy should take a completely new direction if the hereditary succession is confirmed. We can no longer consider North Korean leadership as a partner in seeking common prosperity and unification of the Korean Peninsula. Our engagement ... should strictly focus on aid (to North Korean people) and encouraging them to bring light and change to the reclusive state."

"NORTH KOREA'S HEREDITARY POWER SUCCESSION"

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized (06/03): "(North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's third son) Kim Jong-un's nomination was made shortly after North Korea's rocket launch and its second nuclear test. These actions seemed intended to solidify Kim Jong-un's power base by giving him credit for the saber-rattling that threatens world peace. When Kim Jong-il was named heir apparent in 1974, the North had said that he took the lead in seizing the U.S. intelligence ship Pueblo in 1968 and shooting down a U.S. reconnaissance plane in 1969. Given this precedent, the communist country will do anything to fabricate achievements by Kim Jong-un. ... The power transfer will not be easy, however. Power struggles between Kim Jong-un and his two brothers could arise, and given the increasing number of North Korean defectors, North Koreans appear to

oppose the hereditary power transfer. It is also unclear whether the ailing Kim Jong-il can protect his son and help him take power without problems."

STEPHENS